

Professor: Nettye G. Goddard

## SPRING 2009

DeAnza College

Classes:

Days

Time

Room

T - Th

1:30PM – 3:10PM

MCC-17

CONTENT: This class provides a comprehensive and an intensive examination of selected literature by African American authors. We will read, discuss, and analyze this literature toward the end of defining African American culture in the United States.

OBJECTIVE: The main objective of this class is to discover what and how African American writers tell us about being black in America.

A second objective requires students to learn the elements of fiction and poetry as well as the criteria for critical thinking.

A third objective requires us to identify an African American cultural idiom that permeates American society and the rest of the world.

A fourth objective requires us to identify cohering themes of African American literature.

REQUIREMENTS: Students will:

- Read all assignments
- Write short essays and group assignments on selected books
- TAKE A MIDTERM ESSAY EXAM
- Prepare oral reports
- Prepare a major written report of a group assignment
- TAKE A FINAL ESSAY EXAM

All essays and group presentations due on Thursday

GRADES:

Short Essays	20%
ONE MIDTERM	15%
Oral/written Report	20%
FINAL EXAM	25%
Class Participation	20%

BOOKLIST:

TITLE:

AUTHOR:

"Bling"

Erica Kennedy

"Invisible Man"

Ralph Ellison

"Their Eyes Were Watching God"

Zora Neale Hurston

"Beloved"

Toni Morrison

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**OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays, 1:00PM -1:30PM in the Writing Center**

**ABSENCES AND TARDINESS:**

Three successive absences mean an automatic drop.

Three absences in any order mean a drop.

Be on time. Class starts promptly at 1:40 PM.

*NO LATE PAPERS. DO NOT PLAGIARIZE - I know it when I see it.*

Last day of class: June 26

Final exam: To be announced.

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*TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE*

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**WEEK ONE: April 7 - 9**

Introductions  
 Overview of the Course  
 Your expectations/My expectations  
 Class design  
 Examination of kinds and characteristics of African American writers, influences of early literature and writers upon contemporary African American writers.

Review of:               Kinds of literature  
                                   Characteristics of fiction poetry, drama

Black idiom/Black language  
 Blues and Jazz

**Assignment for WEEK TWO:**

In Hand Out, read pp 1-30  
 In *African American Literature* read pp xxi - 115

**WEEK TWO: April 14 - 16**

Lecture and class discussion on assigned readings

**Assignment for WEEK THREE:**

In *Hip Hop Generation*, read the entire pp 1 - 30  
 Writing assignment, p. 116 in *African American Literature*

Writing Assignment**WEEK THREE: April 21 - 23**

Discussion:               Examining early African American literature; comparing and contrasting early writers with contemporary writers, discussing elements of fiction, analyzing literature, effective writing.

Essay Due**Assignment for WEEK FOUR:**

In *Bling*; read the entire book  
 In *Hip Hop Generation* read pp 121 – 144  
 In Hand Out – Reread all material

**WEEK FOUR: April 28 - 30**

Lecture and discussion:       Black language, blues, jazz, Ellison's use of the black idiom, symbolism, naming; precursors to Hip Hop and Rap

Group Assignment due  
 Meaning of Ellison's names

**Assignment for WEEK FIVE:**

In *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; read the entire book  
 Review characteristics of Black dialect/language

**WEEK FIVE: May 5 - 7**

Discussion:               Their Eyes Were Watching God; new ideas in Hurston's literature; symbolism; voodoo; women's portrayal in African American literature.

Group presentations: Role play scene from Hurston

**Assignment for WEEK SIX:**

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Begin reading *Beloved*

**WEEK SIX: May 12 - 14**

Tuesday: Review everything from Week One to present

**MID TERM**

**Assignment for WEEK SEVEN:**

Finish reading *Beloved*

**WEEK SEVEN: May 19 - 21**

Discussion: Black literary criticism, *Beloved*; slavery

Essay due

**Assignment for WEEK EIGHT:**

August Wilson's "Fences"

In *African American Literature* read pp 145 – 215

**WEEK EIGHT: May 26 - 28**

Discussion and reading from Wilson's play.

Group presentations: Scenes from Wilson's "Fences"

**Assignment for WEEK NINE:**

McMillan's *A Day Late and a Dollar Short*; read the entire book

**WEEK NINE: June 2 - 4**

Discuss McMillan's writing; compare and contrast with other writers; early writers - male writers

Discuss critical theory

Essay due

**Assignment for WEEK TEN:**

Lori Park's *Top Dog/Under Dog*; read the entire book

Review

**WEEK TEN: June 9 - 11**

Read aloud *Top Dog/Under Dog*

Discuss Black language/idiom

Read Langston Hughes' poetry; Rap lyrics

**Assignment for WEEK ELEVEN:**

Review *Top Dog/Under Dog*

Review *The Hip Hop Generation*

Review African American literary traditions; representative writers; characters

**WEEK TWELVE: June 16 - 18**

Review - Discussion

Essay

**FINAL EXAMINATION – TBA**